

JOSEPH P. RILEY, JR.  
Mayor, Charleston, South Carolina

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Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. is widely considered one of the most visionary and highly effective governmental leaders in America. First elected Mayor in December 1975, Mayor Riley is serving an unprecedented tenth term. Under his leadership, Charleston has increased its commitment to racial harmony and progress, achieved a substantial decrease in crime, experienced a remarkable revitalization of its historic downtown business district, seen the creation and growth of Spoleto Festival U.S.A., added significantly to the City's park system, including the highly celebrated Waterfront Park, developed nationally-acclaimed affordable housing, and experienced unprecedented growth in Charleston's size and population. Mayor Riley has led a city government with an impressive record of innovation in public safety, housing, arts and culture, children's issues, the creation of park and other public spaces, and economic revitalization and development. The City of Charleston is recognized as one of the most livable and progressive cities in the United States.

Mayor Riley has held numerous national leadership positions and received many awards and distinctions. President Barack Obama presented Mayor Riley with the 2009 National Medal of the Arts at the White House for cultivating Charleston's historic and cultural resources to enhance public spaces, and for revitalizing urban centers throughout our nation as founder of the Mayors' Institute on City Design. The American Architectural Foundation and the U. S. Conference of Mayors in February 2010 created The Joseph P. Riley, Jr. Award for Leadership in City Design in his honor. He received the South Carolina Governor's Award in the Humanities in 2005 and the American Society of Landscape Architects' 2004 Olmsted Medal; *Governing Magazine* named him their Public Official of the Year in 2003 for "leveraging the power of urban design and civic space." The American Architectural Foundation honored him in February 2002 with the Keystone Award for exemplary leadership to those who use architecture to transform their communities; he was named one of the 2004 Giants of Design by *House Beautiful Magazine*; received the first U. S. Conference of Mayors President's Award in 2000 for outstanding leadership. In July 2000, he was honored as the first recipient of the Urban Land Institute J. C. Nichols Prize for Visionary Urban Development, and in September 2000, was honored with the Arthur J. Clement Award in Race Relations for his battle to remove the confederate flag from the S.C. Statehouse. Mayor Riley received the 1994 Thomas Jefferson Award from the American Institute of Architects for Public Architecture for "his exceptional leadership and 'Jeffersonian' vision in redefining the promise and, ultimately the future, of our nation and its cities." In 1997, he received the Seaside Prize from the Seaside Institute for exemplary leadership and contributions to high-quality urban design throughout America. He received the Outstanding Mayors Award from the National Urban Coalition, the Distinguished Citizen Award by the National Association of Realtors and named the 1991 Municipal Leader of the Year by *American City & County*. Mayor Riley has received the Order of the Palmetto, been named South Carolinian of the Year, and given the 1982 Verner Award by the South Carolina Arts Commission for outstanding contributions to the arts. The Drummond Center, Erskine College, awarded the Mayor the

Drummond Award, presented annually to a citizen who exhibits statesmanship in South Carolina. He is an Honorary Member of the American Institute of Architecture and the American Society of Landscape Architects. Mayor Riley received many commendations for his leadership of the Charleston community before, during and after Hurricane Hugo in 1989.

He served as President of the U. S. Conference of Mayors 1986-87 and currently serves on the USCM's Executive Committee. He served as Chairman of the Cities Task Force of the Southern Growth Policies Board and was President of the National Association of Democratic Mayors (1988-92).

Mayor Riley has received honorary degrees from The Citadel, the University of South Carolina, Clemson University, the Medical University of South Carolina, Winthrop University and the College of Charleston.

Throughout his lifetime of experience in Charleston, Mayor Riley has become a leading expert on urban design and livability issues and is a frequent speaker across the country on these topics.

Mayor Riley's vision, leadership, and impressive list of accomplishments have brought him and the City of Charleston national and international acclaim. The City of Charleston has also been named an All-America City. In 2009, *Forbes Magazine* named Charleston one of the world's smartest cities, ranking it number 8 in their top 10. *The Wall Street Journal* reported in 2011 that the Charleston Metropolitan area had the biggest growth in the U.S. over the past decade in the percentage of adults with college degrees. For the 19<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, readers of *Condé Nast Traveler* ranked Charleston a "Top 10" travel destination in the U.S. and in 2011, Charleston was honored with the number 1 spot. In 2011, *U.S. News and World Report* ranked King Street among America's best shopping streets. *The Lonely Planet Travel Guide* chose Charleston as one of the top 10 cities in the world to visit.

Joseph P. Riley, Jr. was born in Charleston in 1943. He graduated from Bishop England High School, The Citadel (1964) and the University of South Carolina School of Law (1967). In 1968, Mayor Riley was elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives, where he served for six years. He and his wife Charlotte have two sons, Joe and Bratton.